

in Boise. He and his wife Marilyn have already announced their intent to hike the entire Appalachian Trail this year which extends from Georgia to Maine.

Finally, I would like to commend Larry not only for his brilliant career in law enforcement, but for his outstanding contribution to the officers and individuals who have been blessed by his service. He and his wife Marilyn have raised four beautiful children, Angela, Tony, Stacey, and Marty, who are now pursuing careers and raising families of their own.

Larry's contribution to Idaho has been great and extensive. However, I know that his retirement from the POST Academy will be the opening of another door and a new challenge for this very exceptional individual. I am proud to have had the opportunity to honor him here today. ●

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 831

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, further on behalf of the majority leader, I ask unanimous consent that at 10 a.m. on Friday, March 24, the Senate begin consideration of calendar No. 34, H.R. 831, the self-employed health insurance bill, and that it be considered under the following agreement: 5 hours on the bill, to be equally divided in the usual form; that no amendments be in order other than the committee-reported substitute.

I further ask that following the conclusion or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to a vote on the committee substitute, to be followed by third reading and final passage, all without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ACCOLADES TO SENATOR MCCAIN

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise to make a very brief statement and ask for a speech to be printed in the RECORD. I attended the National Veterans of Foreign Wars Convention and heard a speech delivered by one of our colleagues that I think is one of the finest speeches I have ever heard any of our colleagues deliver, although it was not on the Senate floor. It was delivered before several thousand veterans of foreign wars.

It was delivered by our colleague, JOHN MCCAIN, from the State of Arizona, in response to being the recipient of Legislator of the Year, picked by the veterans, the VFW.

I strongly commend it to my colleagues, because it is the most articu-

late statement I have ever heard, and I believe one of the most articulate they will ever read, about what it means to serve one's country.

I will say now what I said to JOHN MCCAIN after he delivered that speech, after listening to him: That is the JOHN MCCAIN that I knew 20 years ago. I am glad to see it is still the same JOHN MCCAIN.

I ask unanimous consent that the address by our colleague, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, at the National Veterans of Foreign Wars Convention, March 7, 1995, be printed in the RECORD at this point.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ADDRESS BY SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN, BEFORE THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS, MARCH 7, 1995

Thank you. I fear I cannot adequately express my deep gratitude for the great honor you have done me by giving me this award. As often as we are the targets of public abuse, politicians also often find we are the recipients of undeserved acclaim. After a while, one learns to keep both scorn and praise in perspective. They come with the job.

Tonight is different. I am deeply moved to be recognized for some small service by you who have distinguished yourselves by your service to our country in war. For most of us, it has been many years since we wore the uniform. But it is still the opinion of those who wore the uniform that matters most to us. I want to thank you very much for choosing me to receive the VFW's Congressional Award. It is an honor I will long cherish.

I will also long remember the honor the people of Arizona have bestowed upon me by trusting me to represent their interests in Congress. I believe they would understand, however, when I say that I once knew a greater honor. It is an honor I share with all of you, an honor we learned about in America, but experienced in someone else's country. It is the great honor of knowing your duty and ransoming your life to its accomplishment.

I was blessed to have been born into a family who made their living at sea in defense of their country's cause. My grandfather was a naval aviator; my father a submariner. They were my first heroes, and their respect for me has been the most lasting ambition of my life. It was nearly pre-ordained that I would someday find a place in my family's profession, and that my fate would carry me to war.

Such was not the case for most of you. Your ambitions did not lead you to war; the honors you first sought were not kept hidden on battlefields. Most of you were citizen-soldiers. You answered the call when it came; took up arms for your country's sake; and fought to the limit of your ability because you believed your country's welfare was as much your responsibility as it was the professional soldier's.

I did what I had been prepared for most of my life to do. You did what I did but without the advantages of training and experience that I possessed. You were kids when you saw combat. I was thirty years old. I believe you outranked me.

I do not mean to dismiss the virtues of the professional soldier. I consider my inclusion in their ranks to be the great honor of my life. The Navy was and yet remains the world I know best and love most. The Navy took me to war.

Unless you are a veteran you might find it odd that I would be indebted to the Navy for

sending me to war. You might mistakenly conclude that the secret veterans' share is that they enjoyed war.

We do share a secret, but it is not a romantic remembrance of war. War is awful. When nations seek to resolve their differences by force of arms, a million tragedies ensue. Nothing, not the valor with which it is fought nor the nobility of the cause it serves, can glorify war. War is wretched beyond description. Whatever gains are secured by war, it is loss that the veteran remembers. Only a fool or a fraud sentimentalizes the cruel and merciless reality of war.

Neither do we share a nostalgia for the exhilaration of combat. That exhilaration, after all, is really the sensation of choking back fear. I think we are all proud to have once overcome the paralysis of terror. But few of us are so removed from the memory of that terror to mistake it today for a welcome thrill.

What we share is something harder to explain. It is in part a pride for having sacrificed together for a cause greater than our individual pursuits; pride for having your courage and honor tested and affirmed in a fearsome moment of history; pride for having replaced comfort and security with misery and deprivation and not been broken by the experience.

We also share—and this is harder to explain—the survivors' humility. That's a provocative statement, I know, and the non-veteran may easily mistake its meaning. I am not talking about shame. I know of no shame in surviving combat. But every combat veteran remembers those comrades whose sacrifice was eternal. Their loss taught us everything about tragedy and everything about duty.

I suspect that at one time or another almost everyone in this room has been called a hero for having done their duty. It is at that moment that we feel most keenly the memory of our comrades who did not return with us to the country we love so dearly. I cannot help but wince a little when heroism is ascribed to me. For I once watched men pay a much higher price for that honor than was asked of me.

I am grateful, as we all are, to have come home alive. I prayed daily for deliverance from war. No one of my acquaintance ever chose death over homecoming. But I witnessed some men choose death over dishonor. The memory of them, of what they bore for country and honor helped me to see the virtue in my own humility.

It is in that humility—and only in that humility—that the memory of almost all human experiences—love and hate, loss and redemption, joy and despair, suffering and release, regret and gratitude—reside. In the end, that is the secret that veterans share.

It is a surpassing irony that war, for all its unspeakable horrors, provides the combatant with every conceivable human experience. Experiences that usually take a lifetime to know are all felt—and felt intensely—in one brief moment of life. Anyone who loses a loved one knows what great loss feels like. Anyone who gives life to a child knows what great joy feels like. The veteran knows what great joy and great loss feel like when they occur in the same moment, in the same experience.

That is why when we are asked about our time at war, we often offer the contradictory response that it was an experience that, if given the choice, we would neither trade nor repeat. The meaning behind that response is powerful, and I fear that my own powers of expression have failed to explain it clearly.